



Partnership Case Study

21ST CENTURY
LEARNING
INTERNATIONAL

Steelcase

Connecting Steelcase With The Education Community

Overview

Headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan, furniture powerhouse Steelcase has reshaped the education space - quite literally. Through its Steelcase Education arm, the company works with learning facilities around the world to "meet the evolving needs of students and educators". Whether the learning plays out in the classroom, the library, the cafeteria or those in-between spaces, Steelcase designs solutions that aim to enable students and teachers to access smarter, active locations. As the company puts it: "Our goal is to rethink, reinvent and re-envision learning spaces."

Challenge

Well known for its furniture for the office and healthcare arenas, the company is a relatively new entrant into Asia's education sector. As a Platinum Sponsor of the 21st Century Learning conference (21CLHK) in Hong Kong and Global Leadership Summit in Bangkok (GELS) in 2017 and 2018, Steelcase looked to connect with educators on a more personal level. Ambroise d'Hauteville, the company's regional sales and education director for Greater China, has been with the company for 17 years; he attended the 2018 conference with Toby Rakison, Steelcase's regional director for Southeast Asia, and Hong Kong-based sales consultant Owen Pescod.

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Owen Pescod
Sales Consultant

Our Approach

D'Hauteville sees a great deal of value in working with 21CLHK - and given that the education community is vastly different than many other traditional business sectors, he feels the networking component is of particular interest for his company. "It's about becoming part of the community; that's how we started to work together first," he explains. "I think of it more as a partnership than as a sponsorship. I think that's specifically the value of participating. It's a long-term process - continuing the conversation."

Rakison agrees. "It's certainly a journey, not a destination, so feedback is critical." He adds, "When the kids' schools have a great experience, then it's up to our types of organisations to adapt. It's a lot about the impact of space on behaviour. We don't have people working shoulder to shoulder and understanding the experiences that are setting the behaviours, so this helps."

It's also helped the tight-knit team make a case for Asia as having huge potential for Steelcase. Pescod explains: "21st Century has allowed us to really see returns and growth, and that's really helped us internally to then go to our management and say, 'There's growth in this market.' It's very easy to become another trade show or another conference, but 21CLHK really has found a place where it can be relevant and helpful for the likes of us - and incredibly relevant for the teachers and educators who come to learn."

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Ambroise d'Hauteville
Regional Sales and Education Director

Results

Clearly impressed by the wide range of talks and workshops during the 2018 conference, d’Hauteville appreciates that 21CLHK isn’t about the hard sell, but that business is still a focus. “It’s interesting, particularly at this conference, to see the quality and types of speakers compared to other conferences, which are more like: ‘Just for teachers, don’t bring sales’, et cetera. But with the international schools, they know this is a business as well. The way we approach this business has to be by getting to know the community. You can see the dynamic - this conference is the best of them all.”



Client
Steelcase

Location
Hong Kong/Bangkok

Services
Conference Partnership

About 21st Century Learning

21st Century Learning International (21CLI) is run by highly experienced educators and delivers world class conferences and events. 21CLI also provides consultancy services for schools and school groups with a special emphasis on the use of technology for administration, learning and teaching



21c-learning.com

